

IN THE CLAIMS:

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Please amend claims 11 and 15 as follows:

1. (Previously Presented) A method for associating at least one rule with a key, comprising:

arranging a plurality of objects in a table based on an ordering of information associated with each object wherein each object defines a key range comprising at least one key value and at least one of the key ranges comprises multiple key values;

if the key is provided, employing a search method to determine a starting object entry in the table;

if the key range of the starting object entry in the table is unequal to the provided key, employing another search method to determine at least one object in the table that defines a smallest key range that includes the provided key; and

enabling the processing of the provided key based on at least one rule associated with the determined object wherein the at least one rule applies to all key values of the key range of the determined object.

2. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the search method includes at least a binary search.

3. (Original) The method of Claim 1, wherein the search method determines if the provided key is equal to a single key associated with one object in the table.